they are indolently adopted only becauſe age has given them a venerable aſpect, though the reaſon on which they were built ceaſes to be a reaſon, or cannot be traced. Why are we to love prejudices, merely becauſe they are prejudices *? A prejudice is a fond obſtinate perſuaſion for which we can give no reaſon; for the moment a reaſon can be given for an opinion, it ceaſes to be a prejudice, though it may be an error in judgment: and are we then adviſed to cheriſh opinions only to ſet reaſon at defiance? This mode of arguing, if arguing it may be called, reminds me of what is vulgarly termed a woman's reaſon. For women ſometimes declare that they love, or believe, certain things, *becauſe* they love, or believe them.

It is impoſſible to converſe with people to any purpoſe, who, in this ſtyle, only uſe affirmatives and negatives. Before you can bring them to a point, to ſtart fairly from, you muſt go back to the ſimple principles that were antecedent to the prejudices broached by power; and it is ten to one but you are ſtopped by the philoſophical aſſertion, that certain principles are as practically falſe as

* Vide Mr. Burke.

they

they are abſtractly true *. Nay, it may be inferred, that reaſon has whiſpered ſome doubts, for it generally happens that people aſſert their opinions with the greateſt heat when they begin to waver; ſtriving to drive out their own doubts by convincing their opponent, they grow angry when thoſe gnawing doubts are thrown back to prey on themſelves.

The fact is, that men expect from education, what education cannot give. A ſagacious parent or tutor may ſtrengthen the body and ſharpen the inſtruments by which the child is to gather knowledge; but the honey muſt be the reward of the individual's own induſtry. It is almoſt as abſurd to attempt to make a youth wiſe by the experience of another, as to expect the body to grow ſtrong by the exerciſe which is only talked of, or ſeen †. Many of thoſe children whoſe conduct has been moſt narrowly watched, become the weakeſt men, becauſe

* 'Convince a man againſt his will,
'And he's of the ſame opinion ſtill.'

† 'One ſees nothing when one is content to contemplate only; it is neceſſary to act oneſelf to be able to ſee how others act.' *Rouſſeau.*

their